

Post-Holocaust American Jews and Judaism, Spring 2019  
M 3-4:55, W: 4:05-4:55  
REL3938/JST3930  
Anderson 0013  
Prof. Rachel Gordan, Dept. of Religion  
Office: Anderson Hall, Room 107F  
e-mail: rgordan@ufl.edu  
Office Hours: Mondays, 5-6 pm Wednesdays 2-4 pm, and by appointment

The Holocaust was the most catastrophic event in contemporary Jewish history. Although the loss of Jewish lives occurred in Europe, the Holocaust had grave and transformative effects for American Jews and Judaism. In one way or another, after World War II, American Jewish communities and leaders realized that they were now leaders of world Jewry. In the past, American Jews had looked to Europe as the center of Jewish learning; now, that leadership role belonged to American Jews.

In addition to a shift in power, other changes occurred among American Jews that affected American Judaism. In the immediate postwar years, Judaism became one of “the big three” religions in America, alongside Protestantism and Catholicism. One of the major questions we will explore in this class is how and why this change took place in the United States, and what it meant for both Jews and American culture.

While a course on “Post-Holocaust Jews” could certainly continue to the present, we will be focused on the immediate postwar era. We will be using a mix of primary and secondary sources.

In addition to learning about post-Holocaust Jews and American culture, you will also have the opportunity to broaden your academic horizons, learn valuable lessons regarding the study of religion and culture, and, it is hoped, improve your analytic and presentation skills. This course is open to everyone. There are no pre-requisites, and no knowledge of religious studies in general or Judaism in particular is presupposed.

#### Caveats and additional information

Syllabus: Depending on time constraints and other factors, the instructor may alter the syllabus during the semester. Students will be given notice of such alterations.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance>.

For grading policies, please see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.  
<http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu>

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.  
<http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio>

Students are invited to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open.

**Readings:** Three books are required for this course. There will be additional required readings, which will be available online or will be distributed as handouts. Students should complete readings before the discussion session for which they have been assigned.

**Required Texts:**

Fermaglich, *A Rosenberg By Any Other Name*

Chaim Potok, *The Chosen*

Arthur Miller, *Focus*

**Grading (how your progress will be assessed in this course):**

- 1) Attendance and Participation 20% A very high participation grade (18-20) is earned by attending almost every class, making comments and asking questions that show that you have completed the readings and podcasts and listened to your classmates and professors. A good A&P (15-17) grade is earned by attending at least 75% of the class and participating every day, but not necessarily making it clear that you have done the readings and/or listened to others. An A&P grade of 14/20 (70%) is earned by attending fewer than 75% of the classes (no matter what kind of comments are made).
- 2) Three in-class tests 30% Test questions will derive from our readings, podcasts, and class discussions and mini-lectures.
- 4) Midterm 20%
- 5) Post-Holocaust American Jews Presentation 15% (15-20 min oral presentation to your classmates on a topic of your choosing in-consultation with Professor Gordan.) You will receive more instructions on this.
- 6) Pop Quizzes 15% These will most likely occur while we are reading *The Chosen*, as a way to keep us on top of the reading, but there may be 1 or 2 pop quizzes before then. Your lowest pop quiz grade will be dropped.

**Grading Scale:** Final letter grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A 93-100	C+ 77-79
A- 90-92	C 73-76
B+ 87-89	C- 70-72
B 83-86	D 60-69
B- 80-82	E 0-59

For UF policies on grading, please see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Monday, January 7: Course Introduction

What did the Holocaust mean for America?

The House That I Live In – Handout – what does this tell us about American values?

## **Part I: World War II and Changing Ideas about Jews and anti-Semitism**

Wednesday, Jan 9 Postwar:

*Gentleman's Agreement* reading Chapter 1

Monday, Jan 14

*Gentleman's Agreement*, Chapter 1 and 2  
*A Rosenberg By Any Other Name*  
Chapter one, "My Name Proved to be a Great Handicap"

Wednesday, Jan 16  
*A Rosenberg By Any Other Name*  
Chapter one and two "My Name Proved to be a Great Handicap" "What's Uncle Sam's Last Name?"

Monday, Jan 21 No class

Wed, Jan 23  
Fermaglich, chapter 3: "I changed My Name"

**\*\*\*Questions for the Author: Submit 2-4 questions for Kirsten Fermaglich, on *A Rosenberg By Any Other Name*, to Professor Gordan by Sunday, January 27<sup>th</sup> 9 pm**

Mon, Jan 28  
Fermaglich, chapter 4: "Have you Been Known By Another Name?"  
<https://www.tabletmag.com/scroll/262412/ask-unorthodox-should-i-change-my-name>

Wed Jan 30 How the Military Experience Changed Everything  
GI Jews!  
Deborah Dash Moore, "Jewish GIs and the Creation of the Judeo-Christian Tradition,"  
CANVAS reading

\*\*\*Thursday, January 31<sup>st</sup> Deborah Dash Moore screening of *GI Jews*, Hippodrome Theater, 4:30 pm

Mon, Feb 4  
Test 1 (*Test #1 includes an extra credit question that can be answered by attending the GI Jews event on 1/31*)

## **Part II The American Jewish Scene: 1940s**

Wed, Feb 6 Taking Stock of the 1940s: American-Jewish Scene  
Primary Source:  
*American Jewish Year Book*, 1943-1944, 133-153 ("Anti-Jewish Manifestations" up until "Free Ports")  
[http://ajcarchives.org/AJC\\_DATA/Files/1944\\_1945\\_5\\_USCivicPolitical.pdf](http://ajcarchives.org/AJC_DATA/Files/1944_1945_5_USCivicPolitical.pdf)

Monday, Feb 11  
*American Jewish Year Book*, 1943-1944, "Religious Activities," 89-99  
[http://ajcarchives.org/AJC\\_DATA/Files/1944\\_1945\\_4\\_USCommunal.pdf](http://ajcarchives.org/AJC_DATA/Files/1944_1945_4_USCommunal.pdf)

American Jewish Year Book, 1945-1946, "Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Jewish Crisis," 37-50.

[http://ajcarchives.org/AJC\\_DATA/Files/1945\\_1946\\_3\\_SpecialArticles.pdf](http://ajcarchives.org/AJC_DATA/Files/1945_1946_3_SpecialArticles.pdf)

American Jewish Year Book, 1946-1947, Introduction, 115-120

[http://ajcarchives.org/AJC\\_DATA/Files/1946\\_1947\\_4\\_USCommunal.pdf](http://ajcarchives.org/AJC_DATA/Files/1946_1947_4_USCommunal.pdf)

\*\*\*Research Questions due for presentation

Wed, Feb 13

*American Jewish Year Book* 1946-1947, "Religious Activities," 121- 136

[http://ajcarchives.org/AJC\\_DATA/Files/1946\\_1947\\_4\\_USCommunal.pdf](http://ajcarchives.org/AJC_DATA/Files/1946_1947_4_USCommunal.pdf)

Mon, Feb 18

American Jewish Year Book, 1947-1948, "Inter-Group Relations," 188-199 (Up until "Restrictive Real Estate Covenants")

[http://ajcarchives.org/AJC\\_DATA/Files/1947\\_1948\\_6\\_USCivicPolitical.pdf](http://ajcarchives.org/AJC_DATA/Files/1947_1948_6_USCivicPolitical.pdf)

Wed Feb 20

American Jewish Year Book, 1947-1948, "Inter-Group Relations," 200-210 (Up until "Programs of Jewish Agencies")

[http://ajcarchives.org/AJC\\_DATA/Files/1947\\_1948\\_6\\_USCivicPolitical.pdf](http://ajcarchives.org/AJC_DATA/Files/1947_1948_6_USCivicPolitical.pdf)

Mon Feb 25

Midterm

Wed Feb 27

Arthur Miller, *Focus*

Spring Break, Mar 2-9

Monday, March 11

*Focus*

Wed, March 13

*Focus*

Monday March 18: Anne Frank

*Diary of A Young Girl* CANVAS readings:

Sander Gilman, "The Dead Child Speaks: Reading the Diary of Anne Frank." CANVAS reading

Wed March 20

**Test #2**

**Part III Post-Holocaust 1960s Jews**

Monday March 25

Fermaglich, *A Rosenberg By Any Other Name*, Chapter 5, 131-150

Wed March 27

Fermaglich, *A Rosenberg By Any Other Name*, Chapter 6, 151-176

Mon April 1

*The Chosen*, through chapter 2

Wed April 3

*The Chosen*, through chapter 3

Monday, April 7<sup>th</sup>

*The Chosen*, through chapter 6

Wednesday, April 9

*The Chosen*, through chapter 7

Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup>

*The Chosen*, through chapter 11

End of Year Presentations

Wed April 17

*The Chosen*, through chapter 13

End of Year Presentations

Monday April 22

*The Chosen*, finish + end of semester treats

Wed April 24

Test 3